

April 20, 2020

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CONDEMNS RACISM, HATE CRIMES AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today condemned discrimination and hate crimes targeting Asian Americans. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted individuals throughout Illinois without regard to race, national origin, religion or gender. As all communities continue to fight the coronavirus pandemic devastating the nation, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have faced an increase in instances of discrimination and hate crimes.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak spread throughout states, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have reported experiencing higher instances of harassment and bias. The Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON) recently launched a [website](#) to collect data related to discrimination against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. According to the A3PCON, Stop AAPI hate received 1,135 reports of discrimination and hate crimes throughout the nation in website's first two weeks.

"That some individuals would use the new coronavirus pandemic to direct bigotry and hate toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders is absolutely unacceptable and must stop," Raoul said. "Racism has no place in our society, and we must stand together to condemn racist acts when we see them, particularly during this crisis."

"The AAPI community is facing an unprecedented crisis," said Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago President Gary Zhao. "This is a time when we need to come together and set aside our differences and biases so that we can overcome this crisis as a community. This is a time for quick action by our community's leaders to take on racism and xenophobia directly.

The A3PCON reports that despite shelter-in-place directives in many states, the number of racist incidents against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders remains high. Many of the incidents being reported have taken place in grocery stores, pharmacies and big-box retailers. The A3PCON has also found that Asian American and Pacific Islander women are harassed at twice the rate of men, and youths are involved in more than 6 percent of incidents.

Asian Americans in the Chicago area have reported experiencing instances of harassment they have experienced in neighborhoods, on public transportation and in airports. Last month in Naperville, a 60-year-old Chinese American man was jogging when he was attacked by two women who spit at him and told him to "go back to China."

The Attorney General's office has discussed the need to address COVID-19 – related discrimination against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders with representatives of the Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago, the Chinese American Bar Association of Greater Chicago, the Filipino American Lawyers Association of the Chicago, the South Asian Bar Association of Chicago, the Korean American Bar Association and the Japanese American Bar Association.

Attorney General Raoul urges Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to report hate crimes to local law enforcement for criminal prosecution. Raoul also encourages people to report discrimination or hate-motivated incidents to his office by [visiting his website](#), emailing CivilRights@atg.state.il.us or by calling his Civil Rights Hotline at 1-877-581-3692. The Attorney General's [Civil Rights Bureau](#) enforces state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination and hate crimes in Illinois.

[Simplified and Traditional Chinese version available here](#)